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maize from these beds is for home consumption, and it comes at a time when maize supplies are running low, and some people have to rely on manioc. The *ombanda* type is sown in September and early October. Then the main fields (*ovapya*, plural of *epya*) are sown in October and November, and only after this is maize sown in the gardens round the houses. In December and January the people are busy hoeing the fields and in February the sowing of beans takes place, continuing into March. This is followed by the harvesting of the gardens in the village, and by the gathering of the maize in the fields, the maize then being placed in field huts to dry. This takes place in March and April, and with its ending the dry season has come.

The dry season is the time for travelling to see relatives and for getting married, since the burden of work is much reduced. May is a good time to clear the bush and then and in later months there is time to build houses. During the dry season there was much more chance of finding people at home, and there were far more festive occasions. This is also a time when men and women can practise crafts such as basketry, fish-trap making, pottery, and so on. In July, the maize dried in the field hut is pounded and brought back to the village, whence it is taken to the traders for sale. The pounding and carrying is often the work of parties of friends and relatives who are rewarded with beer. Occasionally somebody's maize is collected like this well into September, but most people finish in August. By August the grass has grown very high, and the firing of it is the beginning of large-scale hunts in which men and boys from several villages may join together. Hunts may be undertaken by individuals or by groups at other times of the year either as a hobby or to kill a destructive wild pig (in which case the hunt will be undertaken by a group of people). September is a good month for fishing. The fire has cleared the stream valleys which can now be sown, thus starting off the year's cycle again.

There is no shortage of land, and hence questions of land rights seldom come up in social relations. A village headman has no rights over land outside his village, and even within a village there are strips of bush from which a new garden can be cut. Land is very occasionally sold. For instance a man return-

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ing home from labour in October wants cleared fields to sow. 423
If he cannot find any kinsman who would give him a cleared 425
field he will have to buy one, and will have perhaps to pay 200
escudos (£2 10s.). A man retains his rights to fields in a village
he no longer inhabits.

The Ovimbundu keep cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and fowls. 231
The cattle are not milked but are used in sacrifices, and for [212]
fines; some have been brought by Ovimbundu from Kwan-
yama Ambo country but they do not seem to thrive in this
neighbourhood. Sheep are few. In my village goats were much
less numerous than chickens or pigs. The traders and European
residents buy cattle, chickens, and pigs.

Fishing and hunting are practised, but despite the ingenious 226
fish-traps, nets, poisons and weirs used for the first, and the 224
popular enthusiasm for, and ritual associations of the second, [212]
neither dominates the actual food supply and ecological back-
ground in the way that maize does.

The Ovimbundu believe that the dry-season grass fires also 241
help to fertilize the soil by leaving ashes. Ashes are sometimes
spread in a village garden, and dry grass may also be left in a
field for this purpose. Soil beside trees is considered to be especi-
ally rich, as to some extent are the sites of former villages.
There is no idea of crop rotation and a field is worked for as long
as it is fertile, that is indefinitely for an *onaka* and from three to
six years, sometimes more, for a field of the *ohya* type. The hoe
is still the standard means of cultivation and the plough is a
rarity.

Coffee-growing on any scale is usually undertaken by people 245
living away from the villages, except for the Protestants who
have been encouraged by their missionaries to plant coffee in
their villages. Coffee, like maize, is bought by the traders.
However, at least two local coffee-growers sold their coffee at
Porto Amboim on the coast to get a better price. Basically, the 241
agricultural economy of the neighbourhood is based on maize, 361
grown by methods of shifting cultivation. The frequency with
which villages rise and fall and individuals change from one
village to another is entirely consistent with this type of agri-
culture.

Axe and hoe blades, blankets, cloths, clothing, cutlery, 000